

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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November 19, 2024
Start: 1:17 p.m.
Recess: 3:00 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE ROOM, 14TH
FLOOR

B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Alexa Avilés
Eric Dinowitz
Oswald Feliz
Lincoln Restler

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate

A P P E A R A N C E S

Kim Darga, Deputy Commissioner for Development at the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

Stephen Erdman, Assistant Commissioner for Homeownership Opportunities and Preservation at the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

Gus Sirakis, Deputy Commissioner for Technical Affairs at the New York City Department of Buildings

John Mangin, Housing Director at the New York City Department of City Planning

Arthur Klock, Director of Trade Education for Plumbers Local 1, Trade Education Fund

Sylvia Morse, Pratt Center for Community Development/BASE Coalition

Howard Slatkin, Executive Director of Citizens Housing and Planning Council

George Bassolino, New York City Master Plumbers Council

Ryan Chavez, Director of Small Homes Programs at Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation

Annetta Seecharran, Executive Director of Chhaya Community Development Corporation

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check for the Committee on Housing and Buildings,
4 recorded on November 19, 2024, located on the 14th
5 Floor Hearing Room by Nazly Paytuvi.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good afternoon,
7 everyone. Please settle down. Thank you.

8 Good afternoon, and welcome to today's
9 New York City Council hearing for the Committee on
10 Housing and Buildings.

11 If you would like to testify, you must
12 fill out a testimony slip with one of the Sergeant-
13 at-Arms. You may submit testimony at
14 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

15 At this time, please silence all
16 electronic devices. Please silence all electronic
17 devices.

18 No one may approach the dais at any time
19 during this hearing.

20 Chair, we are ready to begin.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you,
22 Sergeants. [GAVEL] Calling this hearing to order.

23 Good afternoon. I am Council Member
24 Pierina Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Housing
25 and Buildings. I want to thank you all for joining

2 today's hearing to discuss four pieces of legislation
3 related to ancillary dwelling units, or ADUs, and
4 basement apartment legalization.

5 I would like to thank my Council Members,
6 Colleagues who are present, Council Member Restler,
7 and others who will be joining.

8 Our housing crisis is well documented.
9 More than half of New Yorkers are rent burdened.
10 200,000 black residents have left the city over the
11 past decade. Low and middle-income New Yorkers of all
12 ages and races are priced out of their communities.
13 Nearly 100,000 of our neighbors are sleeping in
14 shelters every night. The need for more housing and
15 low-cost housing above all is critical. Yet despite
16 that need, just a handful of neighborhoods have
17 carried the burden of building housing in our city.
18 Over the last decade, 10 Council Districts have built
19 50,000 units of affordable housing, more than the
20 other 41 Districts combined. Accessory dwelling units
21 are a small but meaningful step toward our fair
22 housing goals, where every community can do its part.
23 Several weeks ago, this Council heard over 15 hours
24 of testimony and received written comments from
25 hundreds of New Yorkers regarding the

2 Administration's City of Yes for Housing Zoning Text
3 Amendment. While we are presently in the heat of
4 negotiations, as you may have seen through some
5 articles that had some interesting information, while
6 we are presently in the heat of negotiations that
7 incorporate important elements of feedback that we
8 have heard, the legislation before us today
9 represents a regulatory companion to the Zoning Text
10 Amendment. Specifically, the Administration's City of
11 Yes for Housing Opportunity Zoning Text Amendment,
12 among other provisions, would remove barriers for
13 homeowners who want to add an accessory dwelling unit
14 on their property. The zoning reforms must be
15 accompanied by Building Code amendments.

16 In addition to the context of the housing
17 crisis we face, I must also take a moment to provide
18 us with a sobering reminder. It has been three years
19 since the historic rainfall during Hurricane Ida
20 flooded tens of thousands of homes, resulting in the
21 deaths of 11 New Yorkers living in illegal basement
22 apartments in Queens. Eight months later, three more
23 lives were cut short after a fire swept through
24 basement apartments in Richmond Hill. The imperative
25 to bring basement apartments and accessory dwelling

2 units into compliance, into regulation, is also one
3 about saving lives. Each year, dozens of families
4 continue to be rescued from these kinds of units. For
5 years, advocates like the BASE Coalition, which
6 includes the Pratt Center for Community Development,
7 Queens Legal Services, CHIA, CDC, Cypress Hills, and
8 the Center for New York City Neighborhoods, have
9 fought for safe basement apartment legalization
10 because bringing existing dwelling units up to code
11 by assuring they have proper exits, safe levels of
12 light and ventilation, and a sensible regulatory
13 framework is essential for both the safety of
14 existing residents of these unit types and meeting
15 the housing and affordability needs of our city. I
16 look forward to hearing from the Administration on
17 how this legislation would help keep New Yorkers safe
18 and provide more desperately needed low-cost housing
19 during this unprecedented time of need.

20 To this end, we are considering two
21 pieces of legislation that come to the Committee at
22 the request of the Mayor. T2024-2764, which will soon
23 have an Intro. number, is a local law that would
24 establish a pilot program to convert existing
25 basement or cellar apartments to habitable dwelling

2 units, and T2024-2765 is a local law that would amend
3 the Administrative Code of the City of New York in
4 relation to the construction of ancillary dwelling
5 units.

6 In addition to the basements and ADU
7 legislation, we will also be hearing two other pieces
8 of legislation. Introduction number 850 by Council
9 Member Rafael Salamanca is in relation to requiring
10 the Department of Housing Preservation and
11 Development to report on the disposition of City
12 property for affordable housing development with the
13 goal of improving transparency on where City finance
14 projects are located and how long financing is taking
15 for these developments.

16 Finally, Resolution number 524 by Council
17 Member Kevin Riley calls upon the New York State
18 Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign Assembly
19 Bill 8591, Senate 1709 in relation to legal
20 representation in certain mortgage foreclosure
21 actions. The resolution calls attention to the need
22 for a statewide right to counsel for homeowners
23 facing foreclosure proceedings.

24 I'd like to thank my Chief-of-, Sam
25 Cardenas; my Director of Land Use Policy and Budget,

2 Ben Ratner; our Policy Associate, Gerard Fernandez;
3 Legislative Fellow, Carla Dominguez, and the Housing
4 and Buildings Committee Staff, Austin Malone, Jose
5 Conde, Andrew Bourne, Dirk Spencer, Dan Kroop, and
6 Reese Hirota. A special thank you for those of you
7 who were not aware, Taylor Zelony, who is our now
8 former Committee Counsel to the Committee. Her last
9 day was on Friday. She did an excellent, excellent
10 job, and her unending dedication to the work of our
11 Committee coupled with her expansive knowledge of the
12 housing sphere made her an invaluable member of the
13 Committee team, who will be sorely missed. We wish
14 Taylor all the best as she pursues a new and exciting
15 opportunity in her legal career. Thank you.

16 With that, I will now call on the
17 Committee Counsel to administer the oath.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MALONE: Please raise
19 your right hand.

20 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
21 whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and to answer
22 all Council Member questions honestly?

23 DIRECTOR MANGIN: Yes.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Yes.

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Yes.

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ERDMAN: Yes.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MALONE: Thank you. You
4 may begin.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Good
6 afternoon. Before I dive in, I want to thank you for
7 the opportunity to discuss accessory dwelling units,
8 including basement apartments, which touch on
9 critical issues facing New York City and present
10 opportunities to make New York City more livable,
11 safe, and affordable. Today, I will also be
12 testifying on Intro. 850, a bill requiring the
13 Department of Housing Preservation and Development to
14 submit quarterly reports to the Council for
15 affordable housing projects on public sites that have
16 gone through ULURP but have not yet closed. Thank
17 you, Chair Sanchez and Council members, for inviting
18 us to testify today and for sponsoring these critical
19 bills.

20 My name is Kim Darga. As the Deputy
21 Commissioner for Development at the Department of
22 Housing Preservation and Development, it is my
23 responsibility to think critically about how we can
24 create, preserve, and protect affordable homes. I am
25 joined by one of my team members, Stephen Erdmann,

2 who oversees our Homeownership Opportunities and
3 Preservation Division, Gus Sirakis, Deputy
4 Commissioner for Development and Technical Affairs at
5 the Department of Buildings, and John Mangin, Housing
6 Director at the Department of City Planning.

7 As the Council knows, New York City is
8 suffering from a severe housing crisis that is
9 generations in the making. The effects are felt in
10 every single neighborhood by New Yorkers from every
11 single walk of life. City of Yes for Housing
12 Opportunity, a citywide text amendment currently
13 being considered by the Council, aims to tackle this
14 crisis by building a little bit more housing in every
15 neighborhood across the city. The plan has many
16 components, from the Universal Affordability
17 Preference, which will be the largest affordable
18 housing program in the history of U.S. zoning, to
19 changes that promote office-to-residential
20 conversion. As Deputy Commissioner for Development,
21 but really as a New Yorker, I love the differences
22 between every borough and every neighborhood in our
23 city. Importantly, City of Yes recognizes those
24 differences and knows that not every community in the
25 city can be treated the same. We do not want a

1 monolithic city. City of Yes proposes tailored
2 reforms that match the look and feel of New York's
3 diverse neighborhoods.
4

5 Today we're here to discuss an aspect of
6 City of Yes that is particularly important in lower
7 density communities, accessory dwelling units,
8 including basement and cellar apartments. Across the
9 city, homeowners are confronting significant
10 challenges. Older New Yorkers, on fixed incomes,
11 struggle to stay in communities they built. Young
12 families can't afford to buy a first home or keep up
13 with the mortgage, and New Yorkers of all ages lack
14 space for young adult children, grandparents, and
15 caregivers. Accessory dwelling units can add new
16 housing opportunities to low-density neighborhoods
17 without significantly changing the look or feel of
18 the neighborhood. Through the City's fair housing
19 plan, Where We Live NYC, HPD identified ADUs as a way
20 to expand housing opportunities in low-density
21 neighborhoods while maintaining their character. The
22 City of Yes' ADU proposal puts this Where We Live
23 strategy into action and is one step to making a
24 fairer city for all.

2 City of Yes will give New York City
3 homeowners the opportunity to add an accessory
4 dwelling unit, a small apartment of no more than 800
5 square feet on an underused portion of their
6 property. ADUs make it easier for homeowners to
7 downsize, age in place, bring in extra income, or
8 provide living space for a loved one. The ability to
9 add an ADU will especially benefit older New Yorkers,
10 which is why AARP New York has spoken out so
11 forcefully in favor of this aspect of the plan, but
12 the benefits extend well beyond seniors. Middle-class
13 homeowners across the country are building and
14 benefiting from ADUs. Today, roughly one in every
15 five new homes in California is an ADU. Indeed,
16 experience from major cities across the country, from
17 Los Angeles to Chicago to Boston, shows that ADUs are
18 a proven housing solution. They can provide a home
19 for a family while also stabilizing homeowners who
20 benefit from being able to have family living nearby
21 or rental income to help provide financial stability.
22 New York City's zoning laws are behind these other
23 cities. Our homeowners deserve the same opportunity
24 and the same flexibility to use their property to
25 meet their family's needs.

2 Permitting ADUs also benefits the tens of
3 thousands of New Yorkers who are currently living in
4 illegal basement or cellar apartments. By bringing
5 this very common housing type out of the shadows,
6 tenants living in basements and cellars will be
7 empowered to exercise their rights. Additionally, it
8 is expected that the City will be able to address
9 violations in otherwise safe basement or cellar units
10 rather than simply issuing a vacate order, the only
11 tool available to them today and one that results in
12 tenants losing their homes.

13 While City of Yes will enable accessory
14 dwelling units under zoning, additional local law
15 changes are needed to ensure that ADUs are safe,
16 well-regulated, and accessible to ordinary
17 homeowners. Today, you are considering two critical
18 local law reforms to make that a reality. The first,
19 Pre-Considered T2024-2764, would make changes to
20 local rules, including the Building Code, to
21 recognize the new category of accessory dwelling unit
22 and to set out rules to govern them. The second,
23 T2024-2765, stands up a program to legalize basement
24 and cellar apartments and certain community
25 districts, taking advantage of new state-enabling

2 legislation that was won in Albany last session
3 thanks to tireless efforts of advocates, including
4 the BASE campaign, Members of this Body, and State
5 Legislative partners like Senator Kavanaugh and
6 Assemblymember Epstein.

7 The details of the two proposals before
8 you are a product of a sustained interagency effort.
9 In 2023, the City retained consultants, BJAH advisors
10 and BAE Urban Economics, to study the successful
11 implementation of ADU programs in cities across North
12 America, including San Jose, Los Angeles, Vancouver,
13 and Boston. Their study found that while zoning
14 changes are essential to enabling legal ADUs, zoning
15 changes alone are not enough. Other local actions are
16 needed. As a result, last summer, the City convened
17 an interagency working group to think through
18 additional local law reforms. This group included
19 experts in the Department of Housing Preservation and
20 Development, the Department of Buildings, the Fire
21 Department, New York City Emergency Management, the
22 Department of City Planning, the Department of
23 Environmental Protection, the Mayor's Office of
24 Climate and Environmental Justice, Department of
25 Health and Mental Hygiene, the Mayor's Office of

2 Housing Recovery Operations. Together, these agencies
3 developed proposals to regulate this new housing
4 type, ensure the safety of homeowners, tenants, and
5 first responders, and make sure that ordinary
6 homeowners can take advantage of this opportunity.

7 As I mentioned, Pre-Considered T2024-2764
8 would make changes to local rules, including the
9 Building Code, to recognize the new category of
10 accessory dwelling unit and set out rules to govern
11 them. The most critical changes it makes respect
12 health and safety, including require that all
13 basement and cellar ADUs as well as detached and
14 attached ADUs include automatic sprinkler systems;
15 fire department access requirements, including rules
16 ensuring adequate egress and emergency escape and
17 rescue openings; a new identification protocol so
18 that first responders can readily identify the
19 location of an accessory dwelling unit when they are
20 called onto a scene; limits on basement and cellar
21 apartments in areas prone to coastal flooding and for
22 the first time in areas particularly prone to inland
23 flooding; in basement and cellar apartments, new
24 requirements for the installation of water sensors
25 and flood alarms as well as inward opening doors;

2 rules ensuring adequate light and ventilation, and
3 minimum ceiling and window requirements, and so on.
4 Together, these rules will help ensure that accessory
5 dwelling units, whether they be basement or cellar
6 apartments, additions onto existing homes, or
7 backyard cottages, will be safe and habitable.

8 Pre-considered T2024-2765 would stand up
9 a time-limited program to legalize basement and
10 cellar apartments in certain community districts.
11 Across the city, tens of thousands of New Yorkers
12 live in basement and cellar apartments, but current
13 law makes it illegal or infeasible to bring most of
14 these units up to code. The current approach, a broad
15 prohibition on lawful basement and cellar apartments,
16 is simply not working. Basement and cellars continue
17 to be occupied, often under dangerous conditions.
18 Tenants lack basic protections because their tenancy
19 is not lawful, and when something goes wrong, first
20 responders are called into hazardous conditions, like
21 flooded apartments without adequate means of escape
22 or egress, or smoked-filled basements without fire
23 suppression measures like sprinklers.

24 Not all of these basements or cellars can
25 be safely legalized, and enforcement against unsafe

2 conditions is critical to protect tenants,
3 homeowners, and first responders, but many units can
4 be made safe. Unfortunately, a complex mix of state
5 regulations, local zoning barriers, and local
6 building codes have long made it difficult to bring
7 those units that can be safely occupied up to code.
8 Using new authority under the State Multiple Dwelling
9 Law, Pre-Considered T2024-2765 is a breakthrough,
10 providing a pathway to legalization for many units.
11 The legislation directs HPD to provide technical
12 assistance to owners of eligible basement and cellars
13 and conduct public education and outreach to
14 homeowners who are likely to have these units. HPD
15 will also, subject to available resources, provide
16 financial assistance to homeowners and, critically,
17 the legislation creates an opportunity for currently
18 unregulated units to come out of the shadows, make
19 vital safety upgrades, and if they come up to code,
20 become permanently lawful units.

21 These rules were designed with safety in
22 mind. Not every basement or cellar will be eligible.
23 Units in areas of acute flood risk cannot
24 participate. Eligible basements cannot pose any
25 imminent risk to life or safety of its inhabitants,

2 must pass an inspection, must have a means of egress
3 directly to the outdoors, smoke and carbon monoxide
4 detectors, and adequate ceiling heights. Once a
5 property enters the program, property owners must
6 continue to follow program rules, make upgrades over
7 time, and within 10 years of enrollment, come into
8 full compliance. But if homeowners meet these
9 standards, a unit can receive a permanent certificate
10 of occupancy.

11 Importantly, this legislation also sets
12 out protections for the tenants of currently
13 inhabited apartments. This includes State law rules
14 that tenants in occupancy as of the time of enactment
15 and who are subsequently evicted or otherwise removed
16 from an apartment as a result of an alteration needed
17 to bring the unit up to code have a legally
18 enforceable right of first refusal to return to these
19 units.

20 Together, these pieces of legislation
21 will bring sorely needed relief to New York
22 homeowners and tenants, making it easier for New
23 Yorkers to age in place, to afford a starter home, to
24 live close to loved ones, and to experience the peace
25 of mind that comes from housing stability.

2 Turning to Intro. 850, we agree that
3 transparency into HPD's programs and processes is
4 important and appreciate Council Member Salamanca's
5 advocacy to move this legislation forward. We're
6 looking forward to meeting with the Council to
7 explore ways that we can refine the bill to ensure
8 the agency can implement the requirements of the bill
9 without compromising on its intent. Most critically,
10 HPD is undertaking a significant technological and
11 administrative overhaul of our internal project
12 management system that will better enable the agency
13 to oversee our workflow for affordable housing
14 projects. We project that this project management
15 system will be built out and implemented in 2028.
16 This new system will enable HPD to publicly report
17 out on the information that this legislation seeks to
18 require of the agency.

19 We're grateful for the productive work we
20 have been able to accomplish on these three bills
21 with the City Council, especially as we work together
22 to advance the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity
23 Text Amendment. Thank you for the opportunity to
24 testify. We look forward to partnering with you to
25 advance these critical measures.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
3 Deputy Commissioner. I want to acknowledge that we
4 have been joined by Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
5 and by Council Member Oswald Feliz.

6 Before I begin with questions, we're
7 going to have remarks from our Public Advocate.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you,
9 Madam Chair. As mentioned, my name is Jumaane
10 Williams, Public Advocate for the City of New York. I
11 want to thank Chair Sanchez and the Members of the
12 Committee on Housing and Buildings for holding this
13 very important hearing.

14 There are a number of bills being heard
15 today, but I'd like to talk about two in particular
16 requested by the Mayor. Intro. number 2764 would
17 require the Department of Environmental Protection to
18 promulgate rules around flood risk areas and further
19 set eligibility and design requirements for new
20 ancillary dwelling units, also known as ADUs, in
21 these flood risk areas. Similarly, Intro. number 2765
22 tackles the issue of converting existing basement
23 apartments by establishing a legalization pilot
24 program under the Department of Buildings. ADUs are a
25 critical component of our housing stock with an

2 estimated 400,000 people living in basement and
3 cellar dwellings across the five boroughs. Despite
4 this, many units still remain illegal, out of code,
5 and at risk of flooding, putting countless New
6 Yorkers at risk. We saw the devastating impact that
7 Hurricane Ida had on families living in these
8 basement apartments when a storm took the lives of 13
9 New Yorkers. The efforts of these bills, in my
10 opinion, are long overdue, but it is never too late
11 to make these critical policy changes.

12 It is also important to note, however,
13 the City alone cannot make these changes. We know
14 this much from the Basement Legalization Pilot
15 Program. We saw only five out of 8,000 potential
16 units able to participate. Despite high interest,
17 many landlords were unable to join the program due to
18 restrictive zoning and a lack of financial support
19 from the City and State to facilitate the
20 conversions.

21 I look forward to seeing the passage of
22 these bills and working with our State partners to
23 legalize, regulate, and protect these units and the
24 countless tenants who call them home, but if we are
25 truly to solve our city's housing crisis, efforts

2 also must go hand in hand with preserving units that
3 we have and construction of new and deeply affordable
4 housing. I also know that there are concerns about
5 these units in different neighborhoods. My hope is
6 that we can work with those neighborhoods to figure
7 out how best to do this, not that we can't do this.
8 If we do not get the housing we need and preserve the
9 housing we already have, we would have failed future
10 generations. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
12 Public Advocate.

13 Okay. So now, turning to questions. I'm
14 going to start with general questions and then move
15 to more of the particulars. You referenced an example
16 in California, but nationally, many jurisdictions in
17 Atlanta, Chicago, and California have legalized
18 accessory dwelling units in basement apartments.
19 Since 2022, can you talk about their experience
20 adopting these policies and have these experiences
21 influenced the drafting of the pre-considered
22 legislation being heard today?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Yes. Thank
24 you. So, we did actually hire some consultants to
25 help us look at programs across the country and what

2 actually resulted in success and what continued to
3 impair use of flexibility, particularly within
4 zoning, and what we found is that successful programs
5 not only addressed the zoning barriers that exist to
6 creating an ADU, so for example, California adopted a
7 zoning code around ADUs in the 1980s, but also
8 address code requirements and make the code
9 requirements clear and consistent, and also provide
10 technical and financial assistance for homeowners.
11 So, those lessons learned from other places were
12 critical to us in terms of how we have thought about
13 shaping this legislation that we are looking at today
14 as well as how we've thought about pairing both the
15 zoning changes with the code changes.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Can you
17 speak to the ways in which this legislation would
18 make it easier for homeowners to operate ADUs and
19 what are the benefits to homeowners for renters in
20 search of low-cost housing?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Can you repeat
22 your question? Sorry.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yeah, just another
24 general question on the potential benefits to
25 homeowners. How will this legislation make it easier

2 for homeowners to create ADUs and what are the
3 benefits for these homeowners and for renters that
4 are in search of low-cost housing?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Great. So
6 right now, I'm going to speak a little bit, take a
7 step back. So, I've been at HPD for some time now,
8 and I was at the City when we were looking at how to
9 create the Basement Apartment Conversion Program that
10 the Public Advocate just referenced, and at that
11 time, we did work with City Council very closely to
12 look at code changes to address the needs around
13 legalizing a basement or cellar apartment. As the
14 Public Advocate said, we reached out to thousands of
15 property owners in Community Board 5 of Brooklyn
16 where it was authorized, and we actually heard from
17 many homeowners that they were interested. At the end
18 of the day, because of zoning limitations as well as
19 financial limitations and complexity, very few
20 homeowners actually proceeded with that program. So,
21 there are some really substantial benefits to what
22 the City is proposing now. First, we have with the
23 zoning changes, not just this legislation, but with
24 the zoning changes, clear zoning regulations when it
25 comes to ADUs. With this legislation, we have clear

2 code requirements when it comes to both ADUs and
3 basements. That clarity and making it easier for
4 owners to be able to navigate the very complex and
5 myriad environment that exists today, we think will
6 make a really fundamental difference. But we're not
7 stopping there. We're also creating a resource
8 library for homeowners to make it easier for them to
9 navigate the codes that we hope will be adopted. That
10 will include step-by-step process for homeowners on
11 how to navigate this, as well as we are hoping to
12 have pre-approved plans available so that if they use
13 those plans, they can move pretty quickly through the
14 process, and certainly that will cut down costs. So,
15 we're working on many fronts to make it easier.

16 In addition to that technical assistance,
17 also we have a Plus-One ADU program at HPD right now.
18 It is more limited in scale today because of some of
19 the zoning and code restrictions that exist, but it's
20 our intent to make sure that that program remains an
21 offering going forward.

22 A couple of other things I would just
23 note. So, we administer a lot of programs at HPD,
24 including homeowner repair programs. We launched our
25 latest homeowner repair program about five years ago,

2 and in the first four and a half years, we got about
3 5,000 expressions of interest in our homeowner repair
4 program. We launched our Plus-One ADU program last
5 November, this time last year, and the application
6 window or the letter of interest window was open for
7 just under three months. We got 2,800 homeowners that
8 reached out to us in that very short period of time,
9 and homeowners overwhelmingly said that they are
10 interested in adding an ADU to their home because it
11 improves their financial security and their ability
12 to house their family and address their family's
13 needs, and so allowing ADUs, whether it's a basement
14 or it's a detached small unit, attached, helps
15 homeowners address their own family's needs. That is
16 what we are looking for here, is to provide an option
17 for homeowners to address their needs and make it
18 easier for them to do so.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Can you just tell us
20 quickly a little bit more about the Plus-One
21 Accessory Dwelling Unit Program? I know it allowed up
22 to 15 eligible homeowners to build or convert ADUs on
23 their properties. Can you just remind us, I know we
24 talked about it about a year and a half ago at a very
25 similar hearing, but how many New Yorkers applied to

2 this program, did HPD select the contractors or did
3 the property owners make the selections, and then how
4 many homeowners have participated to date? Well, you
5 just mentioned some of the changes.

6 And, sorry, before you answer, I just
7 want to acknowledge that we were joined by Council
8 Member Avilés.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So I'll start
10 and then I'm going to pass it on to my colleague,
11 Stephen Erdman, who oversees the Division that runs
12 the program. So, the Plus-One ADU program is a loan
13 program that HPD administers. It is jointly financed
14 between HPD and the State, so we basically worked
15 with a partner organization to secure state funding.
16 We provide about 220,000 dollars per unit or up to,
17 and the State provides up to 175,000 dollars per unit
18 in order to help low- and moderate-income homeowners
19 address the cost associated with creating a legal
20 unit. It is, like I said just a second ago, we saw
21 really, really, really significant demand from
22 homeowners in a very limited time. That level of
23 demand is unprecedented. We don't see that in any of
24 our other loan programs, and so it is clear to us,
25 not only from that program, but from what we saw in

2 the basement program, some of the research other
3 organizations have done, that creating ADUs is
4 something that New Yorkers are desperately interested
5 in doing. So, I'm going to turn it over to Stephen to
6 talk a little bit about how we structure the
7 financial assistance to make it affordable to
8 homeowners, and also maybe to talk a little bit about
9 the technical assistance we're providing.

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ERDMAN: Thank you,
11 Kim. So as mentioned, the City and the State both
12 provide financial resources to homeowners to
13 construct the ADUs, but as we've mentioned in the
14 testimony and already in the Q and A, it's not just
15 about financial resources. There's also technical
16 assistance that's needed to navigate the process, the
17 code requirements, so we do work with non-profit
18 partners who help the homeowners who participate in
19 overseeing the construction of the ADU, the pre-
20 development process. They also provide training
21 (INAUDIBLE) small landlord. There's a lot of
22 (INAUDIBLE) assistance that is provided as part of
23 the program. We already mentioned that we had about
24 2,800 households express interest. We're working with
25 a subset of those households on applications right

2 now, and we're working on some active applications
3 and hoping to get to the first loan closings soon,
4 and we have funding for about 35 households as part
5 of the current program.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: One thing I
7 would just add to what Stephen said is that what we
8 found is even today, we were very clear in
9 advertising the program that it was available to
10 existing single-family homeowners because we knew
11 that the zoning today creates really substantial
12 restrictions, and we also know that the multiple-
13 dwelling law creates very substantial restrictions
14 for homeowners converting from a two- to a three-
15 family so we did actually create some limitations.
16 Even with that, we got all kinds of homeowners that
17 reached out, and many of those homeowners still face
18 very substantial restrictions within the current
19 regulations. Floor area, lot area, 30 percent of
20 those that expressed interest were not able to move
21 forward because of that. Because of minimum yard
22 requirements, 15 percent. Distance between
23 structures, 13 percent. And then on a more limited
24 basis, there were some restrictions associated with
25 parking and coastal flood risk so it's very clear to

2 us that there is really substantial demand, but if we
3 don't actually address the really substantial
4 regulatory barriers that exist today, we're going to
5 continue to prevent owners from having the option.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Is there
7 any information you can share about the geographic
8 spread of the interest from these 2,800 homeowners?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Yeah, so we
10 actually had interest from all five boroughs, even
11 Manhattan, which I found very interesting. It was the
12 least in Manhattan.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: They have yards
14 there?

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: It was the
16 least in Manhattan. It would make sense given just
17 the density and housing typology. The most demand was
18 in Queens, Staten Island, and Bronx. And Staten
19 Island and Bronx were pretty equivalent, with Queens
20 being first, Brooklyn being second.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Now I'm just
22 remarking, no shade to my Colleagues, but remarking
23 that some of the strongest concerns and oppositions
24 that we're hearing to just the legalization of
25 accessory dwelling units is coming from parts of

2 Queens and Staten Island so I think that's very
3 interesting. It'd be helpful to have those numbers
4 and any breakdown that you can provide on, maybe even
5 by Council Members, Council Districts, to share that
6 with folks so they can see what the interest levels
7 are in their own communities.

8 Great. So, my next question is on
9 affordability protections, right. We're talking about
10 ADUs, and you and I both framed similarly that
11 accessory dwelling units can be helpful as meeting a
12 part of the housing crisis that we have. Jumaane, the
13 Public Advocate, just mentioned that many advocates
14 have estimated an estimated 400,000 New Yorkers that
15 live in basement apartments now. They live there
16 today. So, for tenants who may need to temporarily
17 vacate a basement unit that is being converted or an
18 ADU, whatever their circumstance, what are the rent
19 protections that are on the table for residents,
20 either in the pilot programs that you have described
21 or moving forward? What is the City considering in
22 terms of protecting residents from displacement and
23 from very big increases in their rents?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Yeah, that's
25 actually an interesting question. This is one area

2 where, you know, working in public policy, trying to
3 figure out the right path, I think it's more
4 difficult, right. I run programs that finance
5 affordable housing. That's what I do as a living, and
6 there are times when we have to make choices, and I
7 think this is one of those times. We just talked
8 about a few minutes ago that right now, the barriers
9 to owners in doing this work are extremely
10 significant. If we don't make this possible for
11 owners, it will not happen, and we will not create
12 safer spaces for tenants to live. So, our first
13 priority here is to make sure that owners have the
14 option that we are balancing feasibility and safety
15 within the codes, and that we can create a path for
16 people to bring ADUs out of the shadows. So that's
17 our first priority. For the Basement Temporary Status
18 Program that was authorized by State Law, and that we
19 had authorized in New York City through the
20 legislation that we are looking at today, the
21 basement or cellar apartments that have a resident
22 there, and at the point in time the law was enacted,
23 and that where that tenant is evicted or removed
24 because of the renovations, that tenant has the
25 ability to return to the unit, their choice to

2 return. So, the point here is not to remove folks,
3 right. It's to give them a choice to stay, but to
4 stay in a safer home.

5 As part of the Plus-One ADU program, we
6 actually are experimenting with this very question.
7 We actually have two options for homeowners. So,
8 owners can choose to have basically cheaper financing
9 if they agree to a restriction on the new ADU unit,
10 or they can choose to have still pretty cheap, but
11 less cheap financing and not have a restriction on
12 the unit. And the reason we've done that is because
13 we are working with so many different types of
14 owners, and what we've learned from the Basement
15 pilot and the Plus-One ADU pilot, most of the
16 homeowners that are coming to us are themselves low
17 income, and that adding an ADU is a way for them to
18 improve their family's financial security so there is
19 actually some tension between creating a restricted
20 affordable unit and improving the financial viability
21 of the homeowner, and so I'm going to go back to, we
22 need to make sure that the regulatory structure set
23 up here allows homeowners to make that choice, and
24 then it's our goal to provide financial assistance to

2 homeowners that allows them to make a choice that
3 makes the most sense for their family.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Okay.

5 Moving to the working group that you described, the
6 interagency working group that helped to draft these
7 pieces of legislation, can you tell us when the
8 working group was established? Who was a part of the
9 working group? Specifically, did the City consult
10 with external staff to the City, members of the
11 industry, plumbers, different trades?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, I'm going
13 to go back a little bit further. This is definitely
14 not the first working group we've had around
15 basements and cellars. In fact, the first one that I
16 was part of emerged after the East New York rezoning,
17 when the community there said, we want an option to
18 be able to legalize basement and cellar apartments in
19 our neighborhood, and so we worked with many
20 agencies, with many external stakeholders to assess
21 what was necessary in order to do that. And, as part
22 of that, City Council passed legislation creating a
23 code essentially for basement and cellar conversions.
24 That code is very similar to the one that we are
25 looking at today with some modifications, we're happy

2 to talk about that more later, but that was really
3 kind of the basis for looking, a starting point for
4 looking at what made sense here from a Building Code
5 perspective, and then subsequently, unfortunately,
6 Ida occurred and we had a lot of deaths in subgrade
7 units and so we have looked more closely at flood
8 risk, particularly, you know, fire risk was early on
9 part of our conversations. Flood risk, I think we
10 realized we can't just think about coastal flood
11 risk, that we really do need to think about inland
12 flood risk as well, and then most recently, we met
13 across all the agencies that I mentioned earlier, to
14 look at how to create a clear, feasible and safe
15 code, both for ADUs and basements, and so the goal
16 here is having clarity to create a cost-effective way
17 to actually do this work but not sacrifice safety in
18 the process, and so that interagency working group,
19 including the Department of Buildings, the Fire
20 Department, the Mayor's Office of Climate and
21 Environmental Justice, Office of Emergency
22 Management, and many others were part ultimately of
23 how we got to where we got today.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.

25 Were there external stakeholders to City agencies?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: In this latest
3 interagency group, there were not. There were earlier
4 external stakeholder discussions, but certainly, I
5 will defer to my colleague from the Department of
6 Buildings about whether or not any of the specific
7 modifications at any point came from external
8 engagement.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: I don't
10 believe any of these provisions were run by any of
11 our Building Code Committees, or from external
12 stakeholders in particular, but just overall feedback
13 that we've had, as Kim described, on what goes into
14 putting together an ADU in a basement or cellar
15 detached unit.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.
17 I've received some feedback already from folks who
18 are concerned about the plastic piping provision in
19 the ADU legislation, specifically U103.5.5. I've
20 heard concerns around health and safety. Is that on
21 the Department's radar, and do you have a response at
22 this time for why plastic piping could pose health
23 and safety concerns within ADUs?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, I'll maybe
25 cover the very basic, and then I'm going to turn it

2 over to my colleague from the Department of
3 Buildings. So, as I mentioned before, our goal is
4 both to create a clear code that is cost-effective as
5 possible, given the overwhelming cost of creating
6 these units, without sacrificing safety. The Code
7 does include allowance for plastic water pipes, and
8 this is based on the International Code Council, and
9 so I will defer to my colleague from the Department
10 of Buildings to talk more about how we believe that
11 that is a safe option.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Yes. As Kim
13 mentioned, the requirement here, we're actually
14 referring back to the New York State Codes themselves
15 for whatever materials are approved for use in the
16 rest of the state, and the State Code, similar to the
17 City Code, is based on the International Code Council
18 Family of Codes. Those Codes are put through a pretty
19 rigorous process. It is the national model code for
20 construction in the country. In some instances, it's
21 adopted internationally as well. It relies on many
22 nationally recognized standards, including for the
23 material standards. All the materials that are
24 approved for use in these standards are then listed
25 for their usage, which means a third-party testing

2 entity takes the products that are there, does
3 testing, does on-site, I believe, surveillance visits
4 to the manufacturing plants on some kind of a
5 recurring basis to make sure that they're still in
6 compliance with whatever listings that are issued,
7 and then gives them the according national listing.
8 The goal here was to try and align with national
9 standards. Given that these are ADUs, there was also
10 mention that there could potentially be, for some of
11 the detached ADUs, potentially the use of the New
12 York State Modular Program, which is already in
13 effect here. We have New York State Built Modular
14 Programs for one- and two-family homes. I believe
15 they might be height limited, but the idea is that
16 they are subject to the New York State Code, except
17 for all of the work that is performed here locally at
18 the job site so foundations, site connections, but
19 what's inside the box complies with the State Code
20 already. The idea was that we would not want to
21 preclude or otherwise inhibit whatever the options
22 are, especially when it comes to affordability
23 perspective, what is safe to be utilized.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Deputy
25 Commissioner. Is this allowance for plastic piping

2 different than what is allowed inside of a one- or
3 two-family home today in New York City?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: I would have
5 to check, but I believe this is different than what's
6 allowed in the New York City Plumbing Code, but it
7 would match what's allowed for a modular one- or two-
8 family home built under the New York State Plumbing
9 Code and placed on a foundation here in the city.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you.

11 Okay, so moving to the number of ADUs allowed. This
12 is a potential inconsistency that we found in the
13 legislation so wanted to ask about it. As amended by
14 the City Planning Commission, the City of Yes for
15 Housing Opportunity Zoning Text Amendment allows one
16 ADU per one- or two-family dwelling with some
17 geographic exclusion, but the legislation allows one
18 per tax lot. Does the Administration believe the
19 legislation will align with this definition of what's
20 in the zoning text at the end of this process?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, within
22 zoning it is one ADU per building, and I will let my
23 colleague from DCP correct me if I've gotten that
24 wrong, and within the code, the ADU code that we are
25 talking about today, the allowance is for one ADU per

2 tax lot. The overwhelming number of buildings are on
3 individual tax lots so those generally align and will
4 allow homeowners to add an ADU to their property.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Why is there a
6 difference in the wording between the Text Amendment
7 and the Code?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: I can't speak
9 to why the zoning text is written how it is. I don't
10 know if...

11 DIRECTOR MANGIN: Sure. Thank you for the
12 question. So, it's not particularly common anymore,
13 but we do have zoning lots in the city, individual
14 zoning lots that will have multiple one- or two-
15 family homes on them. In that situation, each one- or
16 two-family home will tend to be on its own tax lot.
17 The reason why we drafted the text the way that we
18 did is, in that situation, say you have a hundred
19 single family homes on a big zoning lot. If we said
20 one ADU per zoning lot, then the first person builds
21 an ADU and everybody else is out of luck, so we
22 wanted to ensure that every one- or two-family
23 homeowner would have the opportunity to add an ADU,
24 even in that situation where you have multiple one-

2 or two-family homes on a big old zoning lot in Staten
3 Island.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you so
5 much. Inland flooding. So notably, this legislation
6 creates geographic exclusions for basement and cellar
7 ADUs in inland flooding areas, as you've just
8 mentioned, Deputy Commissioner. How does the
9 Administration believe that inland flood risk should
10 be assessed for the purposes of basement ADU safety?
11 How should this risk mapping be updated over time to
12 reflect a changing climate?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Sure. So, as I
14 mentioned a few minutes ago, when we originally
15 created a basement cellar conversion code back in
16 2018-2019, we were primarily concerned with coastal
17 flood risk. That was after Sandy. We understood the
18 impact that storm surge could have in terms of
19 safety. We hadn't really thought as much, I think, in
20 terms of basement, especially subgrade units, the
21 potential risk of inland flooding and, since IDA, we
22 have done substantial work in better understanding,
23 trying to better understand that risk. We have looked
24 at basement flood mitigation. We have a study that is
25 ongoing that we expect to have the results of by

2027. We've looked at the feasibility of backwater valves in terms of mitigation for inland flooding, and DEP has actively looked at geography where there is higher likelihood of severe inland flood risk, and so the legislation that you have before you today, particularly with regard to basement and cellars, does not allow basement or cellar legalization in coastal flood areas or in areas where there is acute or high risk of inland flooding, and that is specifically the 10-year rainfall flood risk area, which is approximately two inches per hour, and we do expect that there will be some allowance. We're going to be working with DOB and the other agencies over the next couple of months, if this legislation is passed, to create rules around areas that have less acute inland flood risk, but where additional flood mitigation actually may be warranted, and there are a range of strategies to mitigate risk, including raising, you know, utilities, making sure that windows are raised a little bit, so not right at grade, thinking about where water moving away from the building rather than toward the building, sump pumps, there are a range of mitigation measures that could be adopted so that we potentially could allow

2 legalization, right, because we know that a lot of
3 folks are living in these homes today, clearly not
4 safely, but making sure that there's additional
5 measures in place. We have thought about flood risk
6 more generally for ADUs. So, for at grade, above
7 grade ADUs, you could elevate, depending on your
8 coastal or inland flooding area. I think that is an
9 acceptable approach. More generally, we are looking
10 at having flood water sensors in homes for
11 participants in the Basement Pilot Program, the
12 Temporary Amnesty Program. Not only will they be
13 required to install those water sensors, but also to
14 post emergency information for the resident and
15 enroll in Notify NYC, which has notifications around
16 flood risk for residents. So, there's a number of
17 other measures that we have written into the Code to
18 make sure that there are both warnings, but also that
19 flood risk is managed.

20 I know you also asked about geography. We
21 are planning to have the maps available within 120
22 days of the legislation's passage.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'd like to
24 acknowledge that we've been joined by Council Member
25 Dinowitz.

2 Actually, I have a clarifying question on
3 that. So, for the 10-year flood risk rainfall area,
4 is that a map that is going to be created and
5 maintained by the City, City agency, or is that a
6 FEMA?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, that will
8 be a map that we will publish within 120 days of
9 enactment.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. How often at
11 this time are the agencies considering?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: I think we
13 expect to update it every five years thereafter. We
14 do expect that flood risk will change over time and
15 potentially get worse, and so we want to make sure
16 that those maps stay up to date.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You said the City
18 will publish the map within 180 days?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: I believe 120
20 days of enactment.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Okay.
22 Ancillary dwelling units. Why is the City using the
23 term ancillary dwelling unit when other jurisdictions
24 just call them accessory dwelling units?

2 DIRECTOR MANGIN: Great question. So,
3 accessory is already a defined term within the zoning
4 that has one of the longest definitions in the zoning
5 text and has very highly specialized interpretations
6 in many contexts. I can say my colleagues at City
7 Planning have spent a lot of time talking with our
8 friends at DOB around particular issues with the
9 accessory definition. In order to sidestep that
10 history, that complexity, and everything else to make
11 sure that we were not, you know, stepping into a
12 quagmire, we simply called them ancillary dwelling
13 units rather than accessory so as to avoid any
14 confusion among plan examiners or others in the
15 future at DOB.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.
17 Does the Administration at this time have an estimate
18 of, with the criteria you're setting forth, how many
19 properties could be eligible for the creation of an
20 ADU or the legalization of an ADU?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, there's a
22 number of things going on right now, right. We're
23 talking about changes to zoning and then we're
24 talking about code changes and impact of those
25 potentially different, but they intersect. So, for

2 the zoning changes, we expect that up to 5 percent of
3 eligible property owners may take advantage of that
4 over 15 years, and I probably have an estimate of how
5 many homes that is, if you give me just a second.
6 That would be somewhere between 26,000 and 39,000
7 ADUs over 15 years based on the zoning barriers being
8 addressed. Addressing the Code changes are necessary
9 in order to effectuate those conversions. In terms of
10 basement and cellars specifically, we believe that
11 the Temporary Amnesty Program could result in
12 somewhere between 2,000 and 6,000 homeowners that
13 potentially would legalize a basement or cellar
14 dwelling unit over the enrollment timeframe, meaning
15 they have to actually enroll in the program by April
16 of 2029 to be eligible and then would have more time
17 to legalize the unit from that point.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm sorry, and I
19 missed the ADUs number was?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So for ADUs,
21 our estimate based on City of Yes is up to 5 percent
22 of eligible homeowners, which over 15 years is
23 somewhere between, again, if we have also the ADU
24 Code changes, between 26,000 and 39,000 ADUs
25 citywide.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.

3 When it comes to sprinkler and fire safety measures
4 in ADUs, do other jurisdictions require automatic
5 sprinklers within ADUs and, in jurisdictions that
6 have ADU regulations, have there been any fire safety
7 concerns or incidents that you would want to
8 highlight for the public?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, I can
10 start and then I'm going to turn over my colleague
11 from the Department of Buildings if he wants to add
12 anything. So, fire safety has been a critical concern
13 of ours since we first started to talk about basement
14 and cellar legalization in the, you know, 2017-2018
15 timeframe. We have some of the strictest fire safety
16 standards in the United States and the ADU and
17 basement codes before you do require automatic
18 sprinklers in the accessory unit. That certainly does
19 go beyond the standards that other jurisdictions
20 have, but we do believe fire safety is essential, not
21 just for the resident, but also for first responders.
22 That is not the only way that we are addressing fire
23 safety within the legislation that we are discussing.
24 We also have a requirement for smoke alarms, carbon
25 monoxide alarms, and if there's gas service, also a

2 gas alarm. We require a firewall or barrier for
3 internal ADUs or a 10-foot clearance for detached
4 ADUs. We require fire separation between the boiler
5 or furnace and any habitable spaces. We also require
6 emergency escape and rescue openings and, for a
7 basement or cellar, that means windows in addition to
8 a door. We have also worked really closely with the
9 Fire Department to look at access, and one thing that
10 we're doing here is making sure that the ADU is
11 clearly identified so, for example, a basement or
12 cellar ADU will be labeled apartment U, a rear
13 attached or detached ADU would be apartment R, so
14 first responders will know where to go if they need
15 to actually go to a building and, of course, we
16 talked about earlier that we are making sure that
17 there is emergency preparedness information posted
18 and that the building owners are signing up for
19 Notify NYC.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you. I
21 know this question came up during the marathon
22 hearings that we had on City of Yes with Chairs
23 Garodnik and Commissioner Carrion, but have you had
24 any further conversations with the Department of
25 Finance or others within the Administration on how

2 converting existing basement or cellars into
3 apartments could impact the tax assessment of the
4 property?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, we have
6 talked about this a little bit. We don't right now
7 for an ADU that remaining class one dwelling, we
8 don't expect there to be a significant difference,
9 though, you know, the State actually passed
10 authorizing legislation last year that would allow
11 New York City to opt into a program that would offer
12 a tax exemption. That's certainly something we're
13 willing to discuss with City Council. But from what
14 we have seen so far, we don't expect there to be a
15 significant increase in tax liability because the
16 property tax class will not change. And my colleague
17 from DCP wants to add.

18 DIRECTOR MANGIN: Thanks. Just one small
19 addition. City Planning spoke with Department of
20 Finance on this issue a few months back, and they
21 clarified that there will be no increase in assessed
22 value and taxes merely with the zoning change. It's
23 only if and when somebody actually does something to
24 the property as an ADU that it could affect assessed
25 value and taxes so that'll be one of the things that

2 homeowners can take into consideration when they're
3 making that decision. The only instance when zoning
4 itself affects assessed value and taxes is in the
5 case of a vacant lot they made clear to us.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. That
7 makes sense. An observation and a question. You've
8 mentioned in response to one of my previous questions
9 that somewhere in the order of tens of thousands of
10 units could be legalized, but we've been talking
11 about hundreds of thousands of units where
12 individuals or families are already residing in
13 basements and cellars in particular. Will the City be
14 approaching enforcement moving forward but, looking
15 backwards, can you tell us about the number of
16 violations issued for basement apartments in recent
17 years?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: I have some
19 information here. I also don't know if Gus has
20 additional information. We could probably follow up
21 with numbers. So, the problem right now for basements
22 is we're generally talking about illegal units, and
23 so getting a good handle on the number of illegal
24 units in the city is very difficult. We do have some
25 information from the Housing Vacancy Survey, and

2 we've certainly heard estimates from some of our
3 partners over the years but, again, it's very hard to
4 tell. I do have some preliminary, some basic
5 information on enforcement at HPD. HPD and DOB have
6 slightly different roles when it comes to
7 enforcement, but it looks like the number of vacates
8 issued by HPD specifically with regard to illegal
9 occupancy has been somewhere between 500 and 600
10 units a year for the last few years but, again, DOB
11 has a more significant role with regard to
12 enforcement today so I would defer to Gus to speak
13 more about their role.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Sure. We can
15 get back to you with specific enforcement stats on
16 this for what we have, but typically our enforcement
17 would be complaint-based. We receive also referrals
18 from FDNY when they run across a scenario that they
19 don't feel is safe, and then we send folks to inspect
20 and where appropriate, issue violations, and if
21 necessary, vacate. Not necessarily every scenario
22 involves a vacate. A violation could be issued, but a
23 vacate may not necessarily be in order, for instance,
24 if egress is in order. Other scenarios, though, would
25 trigger maybe an automatic vacate for things such as

2 illegal gas work that might be in connection with the
3 additional dwelling unit.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Moving
5 forward, if this bill becomes law, if the zoning tax
6 amendment becomes law, would homeowners still be
7 penalized with fines and enforcement, or would they
8 be asked to attempt to legalize the structure?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, an owner
10 that is enrolled in the Temporary Authorization
11 Program, we will not enforce vacates during that
12 timeframe. The idea is to actually put these
13 properties on a road to legalization. In order to
14 enroll, they have to pass some basic safety
15 standards, so there is an inspection of the property,
16 and we can defer or waive penalties during the
17 temporary legalization or temporary status period as
18 well.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.
20 Okay. With respect to costs and financial incentives
21 we've been talking about, the State has allowed the
22 City to create an ADU tax exemption. Is the City in
23 the process of creating one and, if so, what is the
24 timeline?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, it would
3 require City Council authorization. We'd be very open
4 to having that conversation.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: So, like, next.
6 Okay.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Sure.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm looking through
9 all my questions. I think I'm near the end. Shocking,
10 I know.

11 Okay. One last question on affordability
12 or just rent levels. Would the City be tracking the
13 rent levels that are provided within ADUs and
14 basement converted units?

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: So, for an
16 owner that is just participating, like, you know,
17 creating an ADU, they're going to DOB, they're
18 applying for the Temporary Status Program, or
19 creating a new ADU otherwise, that's something that
20 we would not have access to. For owners that are
21 participating in our Financing Program, that is
22 absolutely something that we will not only track, but
23 have access to information for and, as I mentioned
24 earlier, the program today offers owners a choice to
25 either agree to a restriction on the unit or not,

2 depending on whether that makes sense for them
3 financially and based on the financial assistance
4 that we're offering. We are working with our program
5 partner to help the owner with lease up of that unit
6 so we will absolutely know the rent charged.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Thank you so
8 much. With that, that concludes my questions. Just
9 mine. Thank you for your testimony today, and I look
10 forward to continuing discussions over the next few
11 days.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: Thank you very
13 much.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. All
15 right. Okay. We're going to take a quick five-minute
16 break so that the pregnant lady can go to the
17 bathroom, and I walk very slowly, and then I will
18 open up the public comment.

19 [GAVEL] All right. Thank you. Calling
20 this hearing back to order.

21 I am now going to open the hearing for
22 public testimony. I remind members of the public that
23 this is a formal government proceeding, and that
24 decorum shall be observed at all times. As such,
25

2 members of the public shall remain silent at all
3 times.

4 The witness table is reserved for people
5 who wish to testify. No video recording or
6 photography is allowed from the witness table.

7 Further, members of the public may not present audio
8 or video recordings as testimony but may submit
9 transcripts to such recordings to the Sergeant-at-
10 Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

11 If you wish to speak at today's hearing,
12 please fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant-
13 at-Arms and wait to be recognized. When recognized,
14 you will have two minutes to speak on today's hearing
15 topic of the following legislation, the two Pre-
16 Considered Introductions with respect to accessory
17 dwelling units and the pilot program to convert
18 existing basement or cellar apartments to habitable
19 dwelling units, Intro. Number 850 and Reso. 524.

20 If you have a written statement or
21 additional written testimony that you wish to submit
22 for the record, please provide a copy of that
23 testimony to the Sergeant, and you may also email
24 written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within
25

2 72 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings
3 will not be accepted.

4 Okay, I will now call the first panel.

5 Arthur Klock from Plumbers Local 1 Trade Education,
6 Sylvia Morse from Pratt Center BASE Coalition, Howard
7 Slatkin from the Citizens Housing and Planning
8 Council, and George Bassolino from the New York City
9 Master Plumbers Council.

10 Whoever is ready can begin.

11 ARTHUR KLOCK: The first thing I'd like to
12 say is that Deputy Commissioner Sirakis, who was just
13 up here, was asked a direct question by the Chair,
14 and his answer was that he would have to check, that
15 he didn't know so he doesn't know the Plumbing Code,
16 and he doesn't know whether plastic water supply
17 piping would be allowed in a one- and two-family
18 home. The answer is no, it would not be allowed. I
19 just thought I'd like to correct that.

20 Good afternoon. My name is Arthur Klock,
21 and I'm Director of Trade Education for Plumbers
22 Local 1, Trade Education Fund. My thanks to Chair
23 Sanchez and Members of the City Council Committee on
24 Housing and Buildings for the opportunity to speak.
25 I'm here to express strong opposition to both T2024-

2 2764 and 2765, proposed legislation governing the
3 construction of ancillary dwelling units and a pilot
4 program converting existing basements or cellar
5 apartments to dwelling units. The use of plastic
6 piping or plastic PEX tubing in the plumbing of these
7 units has been quietly slid into both bills and makes
8 them risky and unacceptable. There are serious and
9 well-documented safety and health issues surrounding
10 plastic piping, and by including it in a bill to
11 expand affordable housing, I fear that this Body
12 might be unwittingly creating two different plumbing
13 codes. One that adheres to the most stringent safety
14 standards for those that can afford it, and one that
15 ignores chemical contamination and fire hazards for
16 affordable housing. It is my opinion that the
17 creation of a secondary building code in New York
18 City for underprivileged residents is abhorrent. Our
19 Building Code has always been a beacon of equity. No
20 more tenements for the poor. I was born and raised in
21 this city, and I was taught that we learned that
22 lesson generations ago. This is not a labor issue.
23 Yes, plastic itself is cheaper, but it is well known
24 that the purported labor savings when installing
25 plastic piping is exaggerated by the plastics

2 industry as a sales technique. Plastic water piping
3 has a terrible record that is only getting worse. Do
4 not take my word for it. Check with FDNY and NYCHA,
5 who only a short time ago reiterated their opposition
6 to the use of plastic piping, including saying that
7 even if its use was approved, they would not use it.
8 Plastic pipes are known to commonly leach chemicals
9 used in their manufacture into water passing through
10 them. Can I continue?

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Please conclude,
12 yep.

13 ARTHUR KLOCK: Passing through the
14 environmental chemicals have also been shown to leach
15 from the environment into plastic piping because it's
16 permeable, while copper and other metal piping is
17 not. It means that water passing through plastic
18 piping is susceptible to both internal and external
19 chemical contamination. Polyvinyl chloride, or PVC,
20 is highly flammable. PVC is a substance that burns
21 and can sustain a flame, and you can ask the FDNY how
22 well PVC burns behind walls. You're essentially
23 putting solid fuel into a building when you install
24 PVC drainage piping. Remember, it travels through
25 shafts and drilled holes from floor to floor. When

2 burning, it releases polyvinyl chloride gas, which is
3 highly toxic. To those who would say plastic piping
4 has been found safe and legal for over 30 years,
5 allow me to clarify the record. Every four or five
6 years when a previously unidentified chemical is
7 found to be leaching from plastic piping, the plastic
8 companies reformulate the chemical makeup of the
9 piping. They do this every four or five years because
10 you can only spot a dangerous chemical if you know
11 what you're looking for. However, they do not remove
12 the dangerous previous generations of plastic pipe.
13 Once installed, they remain hidden like the lead pipe
14 of yesteryear. It is also critical to mention that
15 these plastic lines cannot be sanitized in case of a
16 biological contamination such as Legionella. There
17 are only two ways to do that, chlorine or high
18 temperature water. PEX cannot deal with either of
19 these things. It won't survive either of those.
20 Plastic piping has been found to be attractive to
21 rodents who chew holes in it, cause tremendous damage
22 to the building when those pipes leak or burst. We
23 certainly have our fair share of rodents. Along with
24 health concerns and safety issues, many multi-
25 million-dollar lawsuits have accompanied the

2 installation and subsequent failure of plastic
3 piping. In Florida, you can't obtain home insurance
4 if your house has certain types of plastic piping
5 installed. Another plastic industry untruth is that
6 the plastic pipes are recyclable. They are not,
7 unlike copper. Even though we're told plastic piping
8 is safe, research continues to point to serious
9 problems, including ingestion of microplastic
10 particles. This has happened before. There was a time
11 not long ago when we were told that lead piping was
12 the way to go. At that time when it was installed,
13 lead piping was widely available, affordable,
14 marketed by the lead industry as proven safe for use
15 across a wide range of applications. Over the last
16 decade, however, hundreds of communities have spent
17 billions of dollars and countless hours finding and
18 replacing toxic pipes made of lead in local homes,
19 schools, and businesses. We are still paying for that
20 previous belief in corporate marketing. Do we really
21 want to use the underserved as guinea pigs again? The
22 plastic piping industry cannot be trusted, and the
23 fact that they need to change the chemical makeup of
24 their product every few years speaks to their
25 dishonesty. I would strongly encourage anyone on this

2 Committee to remove the language on plastic piping
3 from these bills. There should be only one building
4 code that respects the safety and health of everyone
5 in our city equally, regardless of their
6 socioeconomic situation. As a child, I often took the
7 bus to Riis Park Beach. I learned who Jacob Riis was
8 and what he did. I urge the Members of the Council to
9 act in the spirit of Mr. Riis and be careful not to
10 create an alternate code for the other half.
11 Sacrifices might have to be made to expand affordable
12 housing, but it should never be the health and safety
13 of fellow New Yorkers that is being sacrificed. Thank
14 you.

15 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

16 SYLVIA MORSE: Good afternoon, Chair
17 Sanchez and members of this committee. Thank you for
18 the opportunity to testify in support of these two
19 urgently needed local laws to advance the safety of
20 basement and cellar apartments in our city. I'm
21 Sylvia Morse of Pratt Center for Community
22 Development, which has been working on this issue for
23 more than 15 years with the Basement Apartments Safe
24 for Everyone, or BASE, coalition.

2 As we heard earlier today, basement
3 apartments are a critical part of the city's low-
4 income housing stock, home to tens of thousands of
5 New Yorkers. Pratt Center has found that unaccounted
6 for units are concentrated in neighborhoods that are
7 majority people of color and where rent burden and
8 poverty rates are higher than citywide. Amidst our
9 city's housing affordability crisis, many low-income
10 New Yorkers will continue to rely on basement
11 apartments. Yet, because this housing is unregulated,
12 residents lack basic tenant protections and may be
13 living in unsafe conditions. To protect our neighbors
14 and mitigate the fire, flood, and eviction risks,
15 basement and cellar apartment safety must be
16 regulated. We urge this Committee and the Council to
17 pass the two bills related to ADU regulations and a
18 program to safely convert existing basement and
19 cellar apartments. We also ask that City Council
20 consider steps to ensure these bills have the
21 greatest possible public safety impact. Most
22 urgently, the geography of basement and cellar
23 conversion program should be expanded to include as
24 much of the city as possible. The program area
25 currently includes the 15 community districts

2 authorized by the State to pilot reforms to the
3 Multiple Dwelling Law, which affects two- and three-
4 family homes converting a basement or cellar unit. As
5 reported in the press at the time, these 15 districts
6 were decided in Albany without transparency and
7 seemingly arbitrarily, excluding many neighborhoods
8 where unregulated units are concentrated. The City
9 has the authority to extend significant regulatory
10 relief to single-family homes, which are not affected
11 by the State Multiple Dwelling Law, outside of those
12 15 districts. A Pratt Center analysis found that half
13 of the city's potentially convertible units and
14 cellars citywide are in single-family homes. We urge
15 City Council to use its powers to make sure the
16 basement and cellar program improves safety in as
17 many neighborhoods and homes as possible. Additional
18 recommendations to strengthen these bills are
19 detailed in our written testimony and testimony
20 you'll hear from our colleagues in the BASE
21 coalition. If I can briefly just add that beyond
22 regulatory reforms, the City will need to ensure that
23 the Basement Conversion Program is adequately funded
24 to serve low-income homeowners and tenants and is
25 developed and implemented in partnership with

2 community-based organizations in frontline
3 communities. BASE has been sounding the alarm on this
4 issue for more than 15 years and, in that time, the
5 growing severity of our climate and housing crises
6 have only increased this need. We urge City Council
7 to act now. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

9 HOWARD SLATKIN: Good afternoon, Chair
10 Sanchez. Thank you for allowing us to testify. My
11 name is Howard Slatkin. I'm Executive Director of
12 Citizens Housing and Planning Council. We are a
13 member of the BASE coalition, and we are also the
14 evaluator for the East New York Basement Apartment
15 Conversion Pilot Program. We are happy to be here to
16 testify with our strong support for these important
17 bills. They present an immensely important
18 opportunity to expand the availability of safe
19 affordable housing for people who don't want or can't
20 pay for an entire house. This will particularly
21 benefit communities of color. Our polling research in
22 low-density areas shows that black homeowners are
23 three times more likely than others to rely on rental
24 income from their homes. ADUs are the most modest,
25 incremental, and low-cost way to add housing in

2 neighborhoods characterized by small homes and higher
3 rates of homeownership, and the establishment of a
4 legalization program would enable the owners of
5 thousands of existing basement and cellar apartments
6 to lawfully implement critical safety upgrades
7 providing both them and their tenants security they
8 lack today. We will be submitting written comments
9 detailing improvements that we'd like to see to the
10 bills to better address the needs of homeowners and
11 renters or at least do so in a more extensive and
12 thorough way. These include ensuring that ADU
13 standards are clear, achievable at low cost, and give
14 homeowners the predictability they need. That
15 includes prompt promulgation of any rules that are
16 required under the legislation; aligning all minimum
17 ceiling heights with international and state codes at
18 seven feet to eliminate the need for costly and
19 disruptive excavation which can cost 200,000 or more
20 dollars to homeowners; making the legalization
21 process navigable for ordinary homeowners by
22 providing assurance that penalties will be waived for
23 good faith pursuit of legalization with achievable
24 milestones in that process; as my colleague here,
25 Sylvia, mentioned, we'd like to see the Council

2 expand relief for existing basement and cellar units
3 beyond the State pilot programs 15 community
4 districts within the limits of the City's authority;
5 and finally use existing coastal flood zone maps,
6 coastal flood zone maps which do exist today to
7 promote sound flood risk management rather than
8 creating new conflicting coastal flood risk
9 geographies administered by different agencies. Thank
10 you for the opportunity to testify.

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.

12 GEORGE BASSOLINO: Thank you. Good
13 afternoon. I'm George Bassolino speaking on behalf of
14 the Master Plumbers Council to raise a major concern
15 regarding T2764 that would allow the use of plastic
16 water pipe which poses a direct threat to public
17 safety. We do support making it possible to create
18 ADUs. The MPC is a proponent of any legislation that
19 makes it easier to do more work for less cost,
20 providing it maintains public safety. Our concerns
21 regarding these plastic materials are detailed in our
22 written submission and align with the purpose of the
23 Building Code. These materials have documented
24 downside which far outweigh any potential cost
25 savings that may be realized during construction.

2 There are current scientific and research and studies
3 related to the potential leaching of toxic chemicals
4 into the water system and their associated harmful
5 effects on humans that must be completed prior to
6 consideration of using utilizing these materials. The
7 2022 Plumbing Code has approved materials such as
8 copper that have a long track record and pose no
9 threat to public safety. At one time lead was an
10 approved material for water piping. Today everyone is
11 aware of how lead is a neurotoxin can cause a variety
12 of disorders from behavioral problems to brain
13 damage. Despite grants and legislation to remove lead
14 pipes, many potential ADU sites are still currently
15 supplied by lead. On October 8th, the EPA finalized a
16 10-year plan that will require the removal of all
17 lead systems. 10 years is a long time to continue to
18 subject New York City residents to potential perils
19 of lead water pipe. We implore you to require
20 remediation of this hazard as a prerequisite to
21 participate in this program. During the testimony on
22 October 16th before this Committee, the Department
23 touted on the co-revision process that includes over
24 650 industry professionals will volunteer their time
25 and expertise to help create the best possible codes

2 for New York City residents. This legislation
3 circumvents that process. It also possibly creates a
4 two-tier code within New York City. Today, plumbers
5 are not just tradespeople. They're technical
6 professionals at the forefront of innovation. We
7 embrace the future of plumbing methods and materials
8 where every pipe, valve, and water distribution
9 system utilizes advancements in science and
10 technology to this most essential trade but, first
11 and foremost, we focus on public safety and
12 environmental effects resulting from plumbing code
13 modifications. Clean water is an essential resource
14 and a right for all persons. Our motto, the plumber
15 protects the health of the nation. This can only be
16 achieved through the application of effective
17 building codes which are critical to avoid negative
18 effects and potential hazards such as water
19 contamination and pipe failures resulting from code
20 modifications done without due diligence. Thank you
21 for the opportunity to be heard regarding this
22 important legislation.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much to
24 the members of this panel.

2 We will now turn to testimony on Zoom to
3 remote testimony.

4 Once your name is called, a Member of our
5 Staff will unmute you and the Sergeant-at-Arms will
6 give you the go-ahead to begin. Please wait for the
7 Sergeant to announce that you may begin before
8 delivering your testimony.

9 First, I'll call Ryan Chavez.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

11 RYAN CHAVEZ: Good afternoon, Chair
12 Sanchez, Members of the Committee. My name is Ryan
13 Chavez, Director of Small Homes Programs at Cypress
14 Hills Local Development Corporation. Founded in 1983,
15 CHLDC is a non-profit community development
16 organization and settlement house based in East New
17 York and we are also proud members of the BASE
18 Coalition. CHLDC had the privilege of administering
19 the East New York Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot
20 Program in partnership with HPD beginning in 2019,
21 and it's through this work that we gained unique
22 firsthand experience with the opportunities and
23 challenges of basement apartment legalization. One of
24 the clearest takeaways from the pilot was that demand
25 for basement legalization is overwhelming in

2 communities like ours. However, we also learned that
3 existing regulatory barriers make it nearly
4 impossible to implement a program of this kind at
5 scale. So, the ADU and basements bills under
6 consideration today represent significant steps
7 forward in addressing several of the barriers
8 identified in the pilot, and we commend the Council
9 for taking up these bills and strongly urge you to
10 pass them. We also recommend a few key revisions that
11 would further strengthen this legislation which I
12 will detail in my written testimony, but here I would
13 urge the Council to align the minimum ceiling height
14 requirements for subgrade apartments with
15 international and state codes that require a seven-
16 foot minimum. This revision would eliminate the need
17 for exorbitantly expensive excavation work, a major
18 barrier in nearly all homes in the East New York
19 pilot. Further, to ensure that this program is
20 effective in low- and moderate-income communities
21 where basement apartments are concentrated, it is
22 critical to accompany these legislative changes with
23 a robust public loan and grant program which should
24 be paired with rental affordability requirements.
25 Without financial support, homeowners of modest means

2 simply will not be able to afford the upgrades
3 necessary to bring them into compliance.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Your time is
5 expired.

6 RYAN CHAVEZ: Thank you very much. The
7 rest of my comments will be in my written testimony.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much
9 for your testimony and for your advocacy.

10 I'd next like to call up Annetta
11 Seecharran.

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

13 ANNETTA SEECHARRAN: Good afternoon, Chair
14 Sanchez and Committee Members. I am Annetta
15 Seecharran, the Executive Director of Chhaya
16 Community Development Corporation which is a member
17 of the BASE Coalition, and my organization has also
18 been working on basement issues for the last 15
19 years. I'm here today to express our support for the
20 bills that enact a basement program referred to as
21 T2024-2765 and the amendments to the administrative
22 codes pertaining to ancillary dwelling units referred
23 to as T2024-2764.

24 As the Committee is well aware, New York
25 City's housing and affordability crisis have reached

1 a critical point. The ability to find safe, secure,
2 affordable housing and maintain it is extremely
3 difficult for low- to moderate-income families.
4 Almost half of the city's population is rent
5 burdened, spending more than 30 percent of their
6 income on rent alone. Similarly, being a low-income
7 homeowner of color in Queens is also incredibly hard.
8 Neighborhoods like Jackson Heights, Jamaica, South
9 Ozone Park were ground zero for the foreclosure
10 crisis 15 years ago and still suffer in the aftermath
11 of COVID. Exacerbating these issues is climate change
12 where basement dwellers live in fear of the next
13 heavy rainfall. Because of this precariousness for
14 basement residents, Chhaya has been advocating for
15 critical safety measures as I mentioned before for
16 the last 15 years. We have found that the current
17 status quo often perpetuates dangerous and precarious
18 living conditions for a significant portion of our
19 vulnerable communities. As such, we strongly support
20 these bills which make subgrade units safe and
21 habitable. We urgently advocate for this expansion of
22 regulatory oversight of these homes that will address
23 and correct existing health and safety standards. The
24 bill addressing basements applicable to 15 NYC
25

2 community districts takes a commonsense approach to
3 creating a program for homeowners. It allows for
4 homeowners to step out of the shadows without fear of
5 enforcement and start on a path towards legalization.
6 It simultaneously requires immediate safety
7 precautions to preserve life in the case of the next
8 disaster. This program will have an enormous impact
9 on homeowners and tenants alike in the 15 districts.
10 Low-income immigrant homeowners will finally have a
11 manageable path to conversion. Tenants will have a
12 first right of refusal to come back after
13 construction is done. We will have safety measures in
14 place to protect from the next storm surge, all the
15 while increasing affordable housing stock in New York
16 City.

17 Like the basement bill, we are also very
18 encouraged by the City's proposal to bring more
19 basement units online through the ancillary dwelling
20 unit bill. This will allow for single-family homes to
21 convert space into safe, livable units. Again, this
22 is a thoughtful, measured, and responsible way of
23 adding safety measures to homes while increasing the
24 existing housing stock without expanding the

2 footprint of the building and preserving the look and
3 feel of neighborhoods.

4 However, as encouraged as we are about
5 the basement bill, we would also like to see the
6 homeowner program expanded outside of the 15
7 community districts to homes that can avail
8 themselves of the ancillary dwelling unit bill for
9 their basements.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Your time's
11 expired.

12 ANNETTA SEECHARRAN: I will submit the
13 remainder of my testimony. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.
15 Really appreciate it. Appreciate your advocacy.

16 If we have inadvertently missed anyone
17 that has registered to testify today and has yet to
18 be called, please use the Zoom raise hand function if
19 you're testifying remotely, and you will be called in
20 the order that your hand has been raised. If you are
21 testifying in person, please come to the dais and
22 speak with the Sergeants.

23 Seeing no one, I will now close the
24 hearing. Thank you to the members of the

2 Administration and the members of the public who have
3 joined us today. This hearing is adjourned. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date NOVEMBER 23, 2024